

REMARKS

In response to the above-identified Office Action, Applicant requests reconsideration of the application in view of the following amendments and remarks.

Claims 1 – 15 are pending in the Office Action. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-10, 12 and 15 are rejected. Claims 5, 11, 13 and 14 are objected to. In response, Applicant has Amended Claims 1, 3, 4, 10, 12 and 15 and cancelled Claims 5 and 11. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-10 and 12-15 remain.

I. Claim Objections

It is asserted in the Office Action that Claims 3 and 4 are objected to because dependent claims, namely claims 3 and 4, incorrectly depend upon a cancelled claim. Applicant has amended Claims 3 and 4 to correct the informality.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the Examiner's objection for Claims 3 and 4 is respectfully requested.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

It is asserted in the Office Action that Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-10, 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Everingham (USPN 6,327,611, filed 11/4/1998), in view of Murakami et al. (USPN 6,725,221, filed 6/25/2001).). In response, Applicant amended claim 1 by adding the allowable subject matter of claim 5. Claims 10 and 15 have been amended by adding the allowed subject matter of cancelled claim 11. Applicant has cancelled claims 5 and 11. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to depend from currently amended Claim 1.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection for claims 1, 3, 4, 6-10, 12 and 15 is respectfully requested.



CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-10 and 12-15 patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

If there are any additional fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666. Questions regarding this matter should be directed to the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

Per 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a) and in connection with the Office Action mailed on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2004, Applicant respectfully petitions Commissioner for a one (1) month extension of time, extending the period for response to FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2005. Attached is a check in the amount of \$60 to cover the petition filing fee for a 37 C.F.R. 1.17(a)(1) small entity. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR, & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: March 14, 2005

By: _____

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendments, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on March 15, 2005.

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